

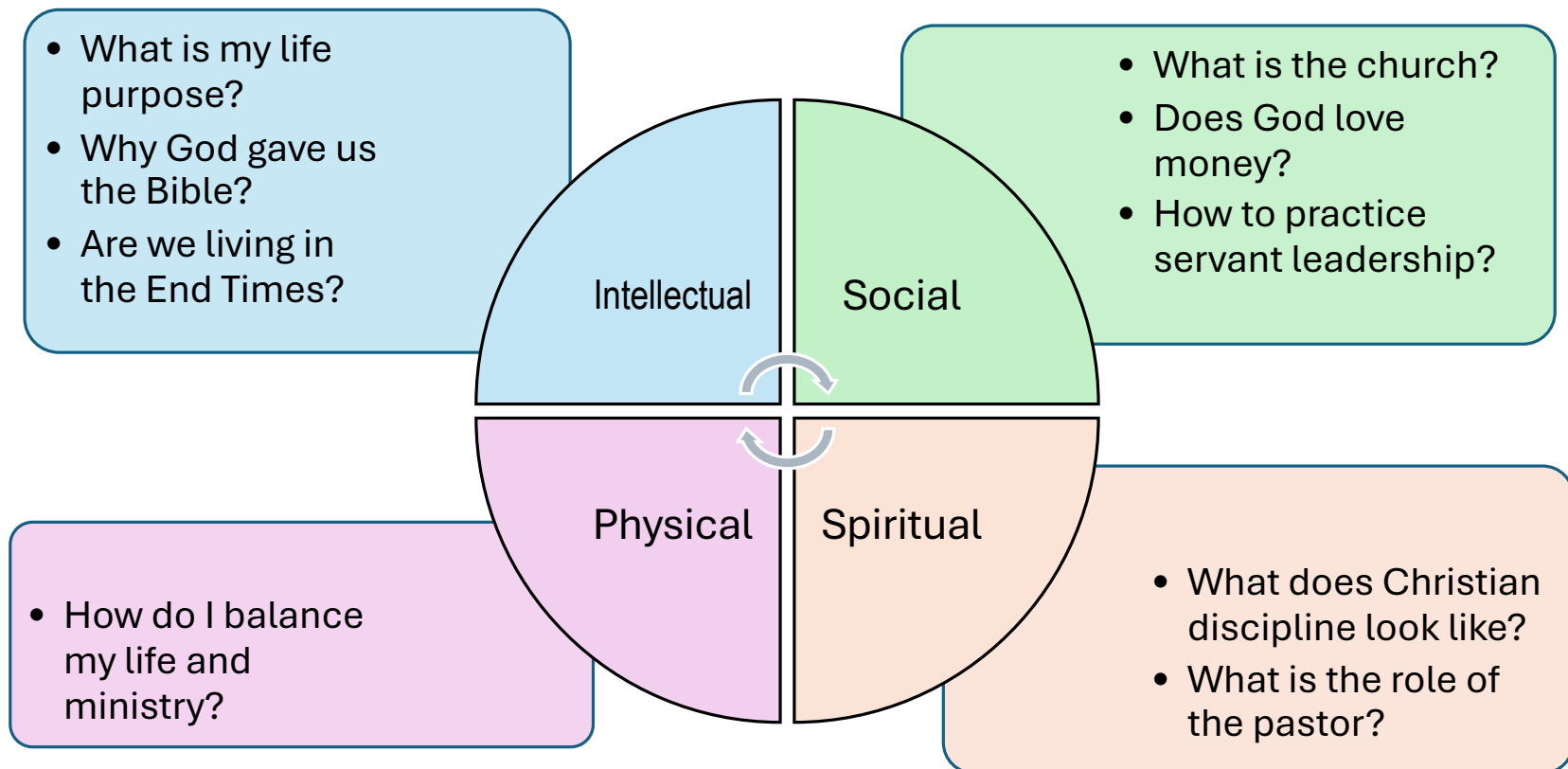


Holistic Growth For Ministry Impact

Session 2

Bible: God's Revelation

Session Topics



Question!

- Suppose you had never seen a Bible, or known anyone who had. Even if there were no Bible, can you prove God? Can you know God's presence without the biblical guidance?

The Nature of Revelation

- Revelation
 - Something that is hidden is made manifest. We cannot know God unless he reveals himself to us.
- God's revelation
 - **Showing** (The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. Genesis 12:1);
 - **Manifesting** (Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the land I had sworn with uplifted hand to give to your ancestors. Ezekiel 20:42);
 - **Making known** (What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory. Romans 9:23);
 - **Speaking** (All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet. Matthew 1:22);
 - **Appearing** (He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. Acts 1:3).

General Revelation

- Natural theology
 - The knowledge of God that is accessible to all people through the created world and their conscience.
 - The grandeur of nature (like mountains, sunsets, and oceans), the existence of God, and the innate sense of right and wrong.
 - Indirect, universal, and non-redemptive; it points to God's power, glory, and moral law, but doesn't provide the specific plan of salvation
 - To leave humanity without excuse and make them aware of their need for more specific information.
 - For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened (Romans 1:21)

Special Revelation

- Biblical theology
 - God's specific, direct communication to particular people at particular times through supernatural means.
 - The written Word of God (the Bible), prophetic messages, dreams, visions, miracles, and, ultimately, the person of Jesus Christ
 - Specific, targeted, and supernaturally delivered
 - To provide detailed truth about who God is, His plan for humanity, and the way to salvation; it is considered sufficient for leading to life change.
 - All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

General Revelation

- God's self-manifestation through nature, history, and inner being of the humans
- Three modes of GR
 - Nature
 - The heavens are telling the glory of God (Psalm 19:1)
 - For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse (Romans 1:20)
 - History
 - The preservation of the people of Israel
 - The constitution of the human being
 - Moral and spiritual qualities that God's character is best perceived
 - In humankind's religious nature

General Revelation



- God's revelation in and through **nature** (1:19-20)
 - God reveals himself through the created universe.
 - The knowledge received through general revelation
 - The revelation is there and it is actually grasped by men. Yes, the Gentiles knew God.
 - The corresponding duty which results from this knowledge is to honor God.
- God's revelation within and from **human nature** (2:14-15)
 - Law in two senses.
 - The written law (the law of Moses) to the Jews & the unwritten law to the Gentiles.
 - Even within fallen men, enough knowledge of God's moral law remains to qualify Gentiles as sinners;
 - The moral law governing horizontal relationships among human beings.
 - They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right (Romans 2:15, NLT)

Limitations of General Revelation

- It has been suppressed, corrupted and distorted
 - All are sinned and are guilty before God (Romans 3:9-20).
- It tells about God as creator, but it can never show us God as Savior
 - Man knows enough to be lost, but can never know enough how to be saved.
 - Salvation can come only through Jesus (special revelation).

Special Revelation (Bible)

- God's manifestation of himself to particular persons at different times and places, enabling those persons to enter into a redemptive relationship with him.
- God's disclosure of Himself or truths concerning Himself through special acts, such as the incarnation and Scripture, which is available to a limited number of people in particular historical situations.
- Significance of special revelation
 - Only way to salvation.
 - Only way to the Christian God.
 - Only way to deal with human finitude and sinfulness.
 - Only way to interpret the historical actions of God.

Modes of Special Revelation

- Historical events
 - The Bible emphasizes a whole series of divine events by which God has made himself known
 - Abraham-> Isaac-> Jacob-> Joseph...
- Divine speech
 - The word of the Lord came to me, saying... (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos)
 - God spoke (Revelation)
- The incarnation
 - Jesus' life and speech were a special revelation of God

The Bible is from God

- God is a sure source of truth
 - Some parts of the Bible are direct revelation from God (Ten Commandments, the law of Moses, the Sermon on the Mount)
 - Other parts are the recollections and reflections of men
 - David's psalm of repentance, Paul's assurance to the Romans that he really wants to visit them;
 - God's participation in the production of the Bible in two ways (revelation and Inspiration)
- Inspiration
 - The Holy Spirit's supervision of the writing of all parts of the Bible
 - God is directly involved in the authorship of every word in Scripture
 - All Scripture is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16): God-breathed; breathed out of God

- Revelation: Truth revealed
- Inspiration: Truth recorded
- Illumination: Truth received



The Bible is Truth

- The Bible is completely true because it is inspired by God
 - But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come (John 16:13)
- The Bible claims to be infallible
 - It applies only to the original writings, not to copies and translations.
 - The law of the Lord is perfect (Psalm 19:7)
 - The scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35)
 - Every word of God is pure (Proverbs 30:5-6)
- The Bible's basic message to sinners is twofold
 - There is law through which a sinner becomes conscious of his sin;
 - This drives sinners to the savior (the Gospel)

The Bible is the Source of...

- Happiness/Joy
 - Jesus replied, “But even more **blessed** are all who hear the word of God and put it into practice.” (Luke 11:28, NLT)
- Growth
 - Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may **grow** up in your salvation (1 Peter 2:2)
- Power
 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the **power** of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes (Romans 1:16)
- Guidance
 - Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my **path** (Psalm 119:105)
- Encouragement
 - the Scriptures give us hope and **encouragement** as we wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled (Romans 15:4, NLT)